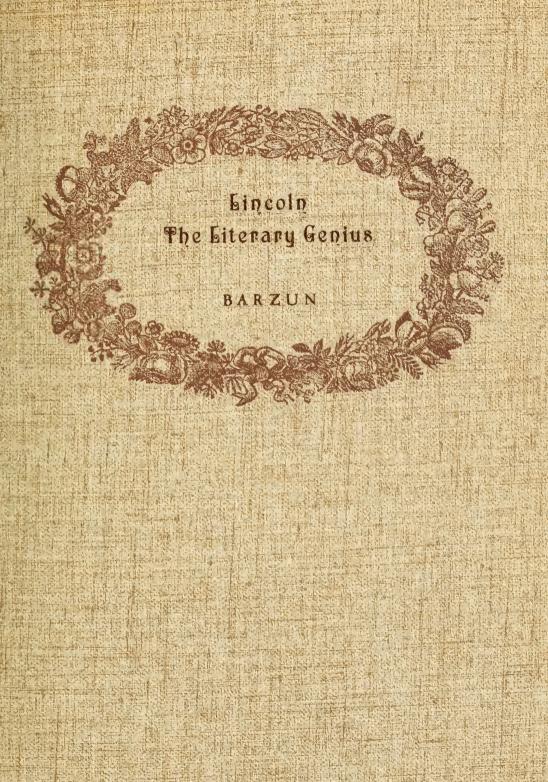
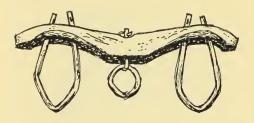


Dean Barzun's essay and the unusual frontispiece photograph of Lincoln from the Lorant collection make this a keepsake volume—of interest to collectors and students of Lincolniana and to booklovers in general.



LINCOLN ROOM

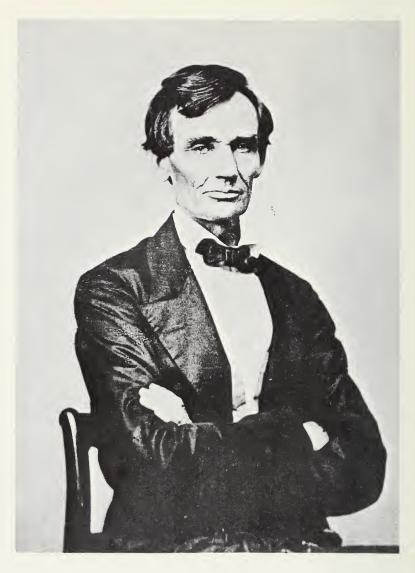


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From Stefan Lorant's Lincoln, A Picture Story of His Life (Harper's)

LINCOLN THE LITERARY GENIUS

by
JACQUES BARZUN

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A GREAT MAN of the past is hard to know, because his legend, which is at best a friendly caricature, hides him like a disguise. He is one thing to the man in the street and another to those who study him closely—and who seldom agree among themselves. And when a man is so great that not one but half a dozen legends are familiar to all who recognize his name, he becomes once more the mystery that he seemed when he first emerged from obscurity.

Just such a blurred image, made up of several simple views superimposed, hides Lincoln from us on the hundred-fiftieth anniversary of his birth. Everybody knows who he was and what he did. But what was he *really* like? For

most Americans Lincoln's grave countenance, too frequently seen in trivial places, calls to mind the rail-splitter, the shrewd country lawyer, the cracker-barrel philosopher and humorist, the statesman who preserved the Union, or the compassionate leader who saved many a soldier from death by a firing squad, only to meet his own end at the hands of a mad assassin.

With these several characters of Lincoln's, I am not at the moment concerned. I want only to mark his sesquicentennial year by drawing attention to a Lincoln who is perhaps the oldest and deepest rooted and least thought of. The Lincoln I know and revere is

a figure who should stand in our history—I will not say, in the place of, but beside all the others. No one need forget the golden legends, but anyone may find it rewarding to move them aside a little so as to get a glimpse of the unsuspected Lincoln I see so vividly before me.

I refer to Lincoln the literary artist, the maker of a style that is unique in English prose and doubly astonishing in the history of American literature, for nothing led up to it. The Lincoln who speaks to me through the written word is a being no longer to be described wholly or mainly by the old adjectives—shrewd, humorous, or saintly—but

rather as one combining the traits that biography reports of certain very great artists: he is, like them, passionate, gloomy, seeming-cold, and conscious of superiority.

These traits in his make-up have been noticed before, but they take on a new meaning in the light of the singular emotion one feels on reading any sizable part of his writings. His style, the plain, undecorated language in which he addresses posterity, is not the product of mere facility with words, nor is it the kind of prose that would spring naturally from any simple heart and honest mind. It is much more; it is the manifestation of a special mode of thought,

of an outlook which colors every act of the writer's and tells us how he rated life. Only let his choice of words, the rhythm and shape of his sentences, linger in the ear, and you find yourself beginning to feel as he did—and, by so feeling, to discern unplumbed depths in the quiet intent of a genius.

But before one can take this path of discovery it is necessary to dispose of a few obstructing ideas. The first is that readers and critics are already familiar with the virtues of Lincoln's prose. Does not every schoolchild learn that the Gettysburg address is beautiful, hearing this said so often that he ends by believing it? The misfortune is that when the

belief is come by in this way it is not worth much. One proof of its little meaning is that most Americans also believe that for the greater part of his life Lincoln's contribution to literature was to tell racy stories. Then, suddenly, on a train journey to Gettysburg, he wrote a masterpiece. Now this is not the way literature is made nor how great artists go about their work—so obviously not, that to speak of Lincoln as an artist may strike some people as a paradox or a joke. Yet even for those who acknowledge the art, the puzzle remains: how did this man from Illinois produce not a few happy phrases, but a style?

On this point the books know little more than the public. The latest collec-

of the United States does indeed speak of Lincoln's styles, in the plural; but the reference is really to Lincoln's various tones, ranging from the familiar to the elevated. And as in all other works that I have searched through, when the authors of that history try to explain Lincoln's power or sublimity, they discuss only the subjects or the occasions of his words. It is as if a painter's genius were explained by the landscapes he happened to depict.

Lincoln has indeed had praise as a writer, but most of it—uttered in passing—has been conventional or absentminded. The few authors of serious

studies have fallen into sentimentality and incoherence. Thus, in the Hay and Nicolay edition of Lincoln's works, a famous editor of the nineties writes: "Of style, in the ordinary use of the word, Lincoln may be said to have had little. There was nothing ambitiously elaborate or self-consciously simple in Lincoln's way of writing. He had not the scholar's range of words. He was not always grammatically accurate. He would doubtless have been very much surprised if anyone had told him that he 'had' a style at all."

Here one feels like asking: "Then why write a chapter on Lincoln as a writer?" The implied answer is unconvincing:

"And yet, because he was determined to be understood, because he was honest, because he had a warm and true heart, because he had read good books eagerly and not coldly, and because there was in him a native good taste, as well as a strain of imagination, he achieved a singularly clear and forcible style, which took color from his own noble character, and became a thing individual and distinguished..."

So the man who had no style had a style—clear, forcible, individual, and distinguished. This is as odd a piece of reasoning as that offered by the late Senator Beveridge in his large biography of Lincoln: "The cold fact is that

not one faint glimmer appears in his whole life, at least before his Cooper Union speech, which so much as suggests the radiance of the last two years." Perhaps a senator is never a good judge of what a president writes; this one asks us to believe in a miracle. One would think that the "serious" critics had simply failed to read their author.

Yet we know that they have read him and that some are perplexed in spite of their own explanations: they wonder, "How did he do it?" They think of the momentous issues of the Civil War, of the gruelling years in Washington, of the man beset by politicians who were too aggressive and by generals who

were not enough so, and the solution flashes upon them: "It was the emotional strain that turned homespun into great literature." This is again to confuse a literary occasion with the literary power which rises to it. The famous documents—the two Inaugurals, the Gettysburg Address, the letter to Mrs. Bixby — marvelous as they are, do not alone hold the clue to the riddle. Indeed, the circumstances they record have such a grip on our emotions that we are tempted to think that almost anybody could have moved us who had written about them. For all these reasons—inadequate criticism, overfamiliarity with a few specially notable examples of Lincoln's writing, ignorance of his early work, and the consequent suppression of one whole side of his character—we must go back to the source and begin at the beginning.

Pick up one of the first volumes of the complete works in either the Hay and Nicolay or the Basler edition and start reading as if you were approaching a new author. Pretend that you know none of the persons and incidents, nothing of the way the story embedded in these pages comes out. Your aim is to see a life unfold and to descry the character of the man in his own words, written, most of them, not to be published, but to be privately read and felt. If you are at all sensitive to words and

to the breath that blows through them, you will soon be aware that what you hear is a new voice. Here is Lincoln at twenty-three telling the people of his district by means of a handbill that they should send him to the state legislature: "Upon the subjects of which I have treated, I have spoken as I thought. I may be wrong in regard to any or all of them; but holding it a sound maxim that it is better to be only sometimes right than at all times wrong, so soon as I discover my opinions to be erroneous, I shall be ready to renounce them." And he closes his appeal for votes on an unpolitical note suggestive of melancholy thoughts: "But if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me

in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined."

One does not need to be a man of letters to see that Lincoln was a born writer, nor a student of psychology to guess that here is a youth of uncommon mold—strangely self-assertive, yet detached, and also laboring under a sense of misfortune.

For his handbill Lincoln may have had to seek help with his spelling, which was always uncertain, but the rhythm of those sentences was never taught by a grammar book. Lincoln went to school (as he put it) "by littles,"

which did not in the aggregate amount to a year. Everybody remembers the anecdote of his reading the Bible in the light of the fire and scribbling with charcoal on the back of the wooden shovel. This concentration is notable, but millions have read the Bible and not become even passable writers. What is not sufficiently known is that several persons who remembered Lincoln's childhood remarked on the boy's uncommon determination to express his thoughts in the best way. At times he annoyed people with his repetitions of an idea in slightly varied form. His stepmother gave an account of the child which prefigures the literary artist much more than the railsplitter: "He didn't like physical labor. He read all the books he could lay his hands on....When he came across a passage that struck him he would write it down on boards if he had no paper and keep it there until he did get paper, then he would rewrite it, look at it, repeat it."

Later, Lincoln's law partner, William H. Herndon, reported the persistence of this obsession with words: "He used to bore me terribly by his methods. ... Mr. Lincoln would doubly explain things to me that needed no explanation." And again: "Mr. Lincoln was a very patient man generally, but if you wished to be cut off at the knee, just go

at Lincoln with abstractions, glittering generalities, indefiniteness, mistiness of idea or expression. Here he flew up and became vexed, and sometimes foolishly so."

In youth Lincoln had tried to be a poet, but found he lacked the gift. What he could do was to word his thoughts with complete clarity, while adapting their order and form to what he surmised others must be thinking. He had, in short, the secret of infallible exposition. One does not read far in his works before discovering that as a writer he toiled above all to find the true order for his ideas—order first, and then a lightning-like brevity. Here is

how he writes in 1846, a young politician far from the limelight, and of whom no one expected a lapidary style: "If I falsify in this you can convict me. The witnesses live, and can tell." There is in this challenge a fire and a control which show the master. And yet the occasion was commonplace, like many other incidents of life about which Lincoln wrote innumerable sentences of equal vividness and force.

That control of words is remarkable in one who had as little external need for it as he had had external opportunity to acquire it. What is still more remarkable is that the command of words went with a corresponding command

of the emotions. Lincoln was not born calm and just. Herndon describes again and again the passionate and eccentric temperament of his law partner, a portrait which the kindly sentimental public has not been willing to accept. Yet Herndon is the better judge and his idea of what constitutes greatness is finer than that of the admirers from afar, who can worship only the pallid fiction and are afraid of the enigmatic, difficult, unsatisfactory great man—the only kind of great man that history supplies.

What did Herndon say? He said that Lincoln was a man of sudden and violent moods, often plunged in melancholy for hours, then suddenly lively and ready

to joke; that Lincoln was self-centered and cold, not given to revealing his plans or opinions, and ruthless in using others' help and influence; that Lincoln was idle for long stretches of time, during which he read newspapers or simply brooded; that Lincoln had a disconcerting power to see into questions, events, and persons, being never deceived by their incidental features or conventional garb, but extracting from each the central matter as one cores an apple; that Lincoln was a man of strong physical passions and mystical longings, both of which he repressed because his mind showed him their futility. The conflict, the balance, made him cold-blooded and a fatalist.

We also know from other sources that Lincoln was subject to vague fears and dark superstitions. Strange episodes, though few, marked his relations with women, including his wife-to-be, Mary Todd. He was given, as some of his verses show, to obsessional gloom about separation, insanity, and death. This is not surprising if we remember that Lincoln was orphaned, reared by a stepmother, and early cast adrift to make his way. His odd detachment from himself, his premonitions and depressions, his morbid regard for truth and abnormal suppression of the aggressive impulses, suggest that he hugged a secret wound which ultimately made out of an apparent common man the unique figure of an artist-saint.

Lincoln moreover believed that his mother was the illegitimate daughter of a Virginia planter and, like others who have known or fancied themselves of irregular descent, he had a powerful, unreasoned faith in his own destiny—a destiny he felt would combine greatness and disaster. Whatever psychiatry may think of this private myth, criticism recognizes in Lincoln the traits of a type of artist one might call "the dark outcast." Michelangelo and Byron come to mind as examples. In such men the isolation from others is only of the spirit. The mind remains a clear and fine instrument

of communication—Michelangelo was a practical architect and Byron a military organizer: in Lincoln there is no incompatibility between the lawyer-statesman and the artist.

It was indeed Lincoln's artistic detachment, born of emotional complexity, that produced his mastery over men. Had he not, as President, towered in mind and will over his cabinet, they would have crushed and used him without remorse. Chase, Seward, Stanton, the Blairs, McClellan, had among them enough egotism and ability to wreck several administrations. Each thought at one time that Lincoln would prove an easy victim. It was not until he was vio-

lently removed from their midst that any of them conceived of him as a rare being, if not as a greater than themselves. During his life they were understandably exasperated at being made to feel at once superior and baffled. They could not bring the apparition down within their reach. John Hay, who witnessed the long struggle, confirms Herndon on Lincoln's true character: "It is absurd to call him a modest man. No great man was ever modest. It was his intellectual arrogance and unconscious assumption of superiority that men like Chase and Sumner could never forget."

This is a different hero from the clumsy country lawyer who makes no great pretensions, but has a trick or two up his sleeve and wins the day for righteousness because his heart is pure. Lincoln's strength, without question, was enhanced by his purity, but his purity was that of a supremely conscious genius, not that of an innocent And if we ask what kind of genius enables a man to master a dangerous, new, and sophisticated world as Lincoln did, with little experience in affairs of state, no great national following, and none of what are called personal advantages, the answer is: military genius or its close kin, artistic genius.

The comparison may startle, but consider: the artist contrives means and marshals forces that the beholder takes

for granted and that the bungler never discovers for himself. So does Caesar or Napoleon. Like them, the artist is always scheming to conquer the world as well as his chosen obstacles. When we speak of the artist's craft, we mean quite literally that he is crafty. And success sanctifies all his acts—as it does for the great general. Both move masses of men and raise them above their normal state by the application of an undefinable force.

Lincoln acquired his power by exacting obedience from words, and this discipline he acquired in the only two ways known to man—by reading and by writing. His reading was small in range and much of a kind: besides the Bible, Bunyan, Byron, Burns, Defoe, Shakespeare and a then

current edition of Aesop's fables. These are the books from which a writer would extract the lesson of terseness and of strength. The Bible and Shakespeare's poetry would be less influential than Shakespeare's prose, whose rapid twists and turns Lincoln often rivals, though with little help from imagery. The four other writers all use the telling phrase, rather than the evocative. As for Aesop, the similarity of his tales with those Lincoln liked to tell—always in the same words—is patent, but another parallel suggests itself, between the shortness of a fable and the mania Lincoln had for condensing any matter into the fewest words:

"John Fitzgerald, eighteen years of age,

able-bodied, but without pecuniary means, came directly from Ireland to Springfield, Illinois, and there stopped, and sought employment, with no present intention of returning to Ireland or going elsewhere. After remaining in the city some three weeks, part of the time employed, and part not, he fell sick, and became a public charge. It has been submitted to me, whether the City of Springfield, or the County of Sangamon is, by law, to bear the charge."

As Lincoln himself wrote on another occasion, "This is not a long letter but it contains the whole story." And the passage would prove, if it were necessary, that style is independent of attractive or

enthralling subject matter. The pleasure it gives is that of lucidity and motion, the incredibly rapid and graceful motion of Lincoln's mind.

In his own day, Lincoln's prose was found flat, dull, lacking in taste. It differed radically in form and tone from the accepted models of the day—Webster's or Channing's for speeches, Bryant's or Greeley's for journalism. Once or twice, as in his eulogy of Henry Clay, Lincoln tried to imitate their roundabout phrases, by turns abstract, genteel, and resonant. But these were exercises he never repeated. His style, well in hand by his thirtieth year and richly developed by his fiftieth, has the unsought eloquence

which comes of the contrast between transparency of medium and density of thought. Almost any example will serve; this is from a Lyceum lecture written when Lincoln was twenty-nine.

"Turn, then, to that horror-striking scene at St. Louis. A single victim was only sacrificed there. His story is very short; and is, perhaps, the most highly tragic of anything of its length that has ever been witnessed in real life. A mulatto man by the name of McIntosh was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs of the city, chained to a tree, and actually burned to death; and all within a single hour from the time he had been a freeman, attending to his own business, and at peace with the world."

Notice the contrasting rhythm of the two sentences: "A single victim was only sacrificed there. His story is very short." The sentences are very short, too, but let any one try to emulate their continuous flow and strong though subdued emotion, or to embody in as few touches the characteristic Lincolnian theme of the swift passage from the business of life to death: it cannot be done, except by another artist of the first rank.

Lincoln's prose works fall into three categories: speeches, letters, and proclamations, The speeches range from the legal briefs and arguments to the political debates, culminating in the Cooper Union Address of 1860; the proclamations

begin with Lincoln's first offer of his services as a public servant in 1832 and end with his presidential statements of policy or calls to Thanksgiving between 1861 and 1865; the letters naturally span his life and a great diversity of subjects. I surmise that the letters were the crucible in which Lincoln fused his style. They are almost all admirable, self-sufficient and brief. By the time he was in the White House, Lincoln was a passed master in the epistolary genre and could frame, impromptu, hundreds of messages such as this telegram to General McClellan: "I have just read your despatch about sore-tongued and fatigued horses. Will you pardon me for asking what the horses of your army have done since the

battle of Antietam that fatigues anything?"

Something of the tone obviously comes from the practice of law. It would be surprising if the effort of mind that Lincoln put into his profession had not come out again in his prose. Nor should we forget that he made his name and became president over a constitutional issue. Now legal thought encourages precision through the imagining and the denial of alternatives. The language of the law foresees doubt, ambiguity, and confusion, stupid or fraudulent error, and one by one excludes them, usually at the cost of many words. In this way lawyers succeed at least in avoiding misunder-

standing, which obviously is the foundation of any prose that aims at clear expression.

As a lawyer Lincoln knew that the legal vocabulary and form would serve all his political and intellectual purposes if handled with a little skill. But it would remain jargon, uninspiring and unlovely to the mind and the ear. As an artist, therefore, he undertook to frame all his public and private ideas with the care of a conveyancer, but in the language of daily life. In the courtroom, of course, he had to use the technical names of the actions and documents he dealt with. But all the rest was in the vernacular. His first achievement was to translate the minute accuracy of the advocate and the

judge into the words of common men; and next, to reduce the bulk and give it pleasing shape. The medium was then ready for any great thoughts, should they come.

This sequence gives us a measure of Lincoln's struggle as an artist. He started with very little confidence in his stock of knowledge; and having to face audiences far more demanding than ours, he toiled to improve his vocabulary, grammar, and logic. In the first year of his term in Congress he labored through six books of Euclid, hoping to make second nature that coherence of thought which he knew he needed in order to demonstrate his views. Demonstration was to

him the one proper goal of argument; he never seems to have considered it within his power to convince by disturbing the judgment through irrelevant feeling. In the few passages where he resorts to plaftorm tricks, he uses only irony or satire, never the histrionics of the popular orator.

One superior gift he possessed from the start and developed to a supreme degree, the gift of rhythm. Take this fragment, not from a finished speech, but from a jotting for a lecture on the law:

"There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest. I say vague, because, when we consider to what extent confidence and honors are reposed in and conferred upon lawyers by the people, it appears improbable that their impression of dishonesty is very distinct and vivid. Yet the impression is common, almost universal. Let no young man choosing the law for a calling for a moment yield to the popular belief—resolve to be honest at all events; and if in your own judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer."

Observe the ease with which the theme is announced: "There is a vague popular belief that lawyers are necessarily dishonest." It is short without crackling like an epigram, the word "necessarily" retarding the motion just enough. The thought is picked up with hardly a pause:

"I say vague, because, when we consider ..." and so on through unfolding of reasons, which winds up in a kind of calm: "it appears improbable that their impression of dishonesty is very distinct and vivid." Now a change of pace to freshen interest: "Yet the impression is common, almost universal." And a second change, at once, to usher in the second long sentence, which carries the conclusion: "Let no young man choosing the law..."

The paragraph moves without a false step, neither hurried nor drowsy; and by its movement, like one who leads another in the dance, it catches up our thought and swings it into eager compliance. The ear notes at the same time that none of the sounds grate or clash: The piece is

sayable like a speech in a great play; the music is manly, the alliterations are few and natural. Indeed, the paragraph seems to have come into being spontaneously as the readiest incarnation of Lincoln's thoughts.

From hints here and there one gathers that Lincoln wrote slowly—meaning by writing the physical act of forming letters on paper. This would augment the desirability of being brief. Lincoln lived before the typewriter and the dictating machine, and wanting to put all his meaning into one or two lucid sentences, he thought before he wrote—he composed. The intense compression came when he had, lawyer-like, excluded

alternatives and hit upon right order and emphasis.

Obviously this style would make use of skips and connections unsuited to speech-making. The member of the Cabinet who received a terse memorandum had it before him to reread. An audience requires a looser weave, just as it requires a measured delivery. This difference between the written and the spoken word lends color to the cliché that if Lincoln had a style, he developed it in the presidential years, when he wrote more than he spoke. Actually Lincoln, being an artist, adapted his means to the occasion. One finds no pathos in him before pathos was due. When he supposed his audience

intellectually alert—as was the famous gathering at Cooper Union—he gave them his concentrated prose. We may take as a sample a part of the peroration, in which he addresses the South:

"Again, you say we have made the slavery question more prominent than it formerly was. We deny it. We admit that it is more prominent, but we deny that we made it so. It was not we, but you, who discarded the old policy of the fathers. We resisted, and still resist, your innovation; and thence comes the greater prominence of the question. Would you have that question reduced to its former proportions? Go back to that old policy. What has been, will be again, under the same conditions. If you would have the

peace of the old times, readopt the precepts and policies of the old times."

This is wonderfully clear and precise and demonstrative, but two hours of equally succinct argument would tax any but the most athletic audience. Lincoln gambled on the New Yorkers' agility of mind, and won. But we should not be surprised that in the debates with Stephen A. Douglas, a year and a half before, we find the matter more thinly distributed. Those rural wrangles lasted three hours, and the necessity for each speaker to interlard prepared statements of policy with improvised rebuttals of charges and "points" gives these famous speeches a coarser grain. Yet on Lincoln's side, the same artist mind is plainly at work:

"Senator Douglas is of world-wide renown. All the anxious politicians of his party, or who have been of his party for years past, have been looking upon him as certainly, at no distant day, to be President of the United States. They have seen in his round, jolly, fruitful face, post-offices, landoffices, marshalships and cabinet appointments, chargeships and foreign missions, bursting and sprouting out in a wonderful exuberance ready to be laid hold of by their greedy hands."

The man who could lay the ground for a splendid yet catchy metaphor about political plums by describing Douglas's face as round, jolly, and *fruitful* is not a man to be thought merely lucky in the handling of words. The Debates abound

in happy turns though they read less well than Lincoln's more compact productions. Often, Douglas's words are more polished than Lincoln's, for the Judge also knew how to take pains:

"We have existed and prospered from that day to this thus divided and have increased with a rapidity never before equalled in wealth, the extension of territory, and all the elements of power and greatness, until we have become the first nation on the face of the globe. Why can we not thus continue to prosper? We can if will live up to and execute the government upon those principles upon which our fathers established it. During the whole period of our existence, Divine Providence has smiled upon us, and

showered upon our nation richer and more abundant blessings than have ever been conferred upon any other."

It is a mistake to underrate Douglas's skill, which was that of a professional. Lincoln's genius needs no heightening through lowering others. Douglas was smooth and adroit, and his argumentation was effective since in their contest Lincoln was defeated. But Douglas sounds like any- and everybody.

In other words, Lincoln's extraordinary power was to make his spirit felt. And this power was chiefly attributable, I think, to his peculiar relation to himself. He regarded his face and physique with amusement and dismay, his mind and

destiny with wonder. Seeming clumsy and diffident, he also showed a calm superiority which he expressed as if one half of a double man were talking about the other. In conduct this detachment was the source of his saintlike forbearance; in his art it yielded the rare quality of elegance. Nowhere is the link between style and emotional distance clearer than in the farewell Lincoln spoke to his friends in Springfield before leaving for Washington. A single magical word, easy to pass over carelessly, reveals the writer's inmost thought about himself:

"My Friends: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe every-

thing..." If we stop to think, we ask: "This place"?—yes. But why "these people"? Why not "you people," whom he was addressing from the train platform, or "this place and the kindness of its people"? It is not, certainly, the mere parallel of this and these that commands the choice. "These" is a stroke of genius, which betrays Lincoln's isolation from his own act—Lincoln talking to himself about the place and the people whom he was leaving, foreboding the possibility of his never returning, and closing the fifteen lines with one of the greatest cadences in English speech: "To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

 The qualities of Lincoln's literary art precision, vernacular ease, rhythmical virtuosity, and elegance—may at a century's remove seem alien to our tastes. Certainly we vehemently promote their opposites: our sensibility cherishes the indistinct. Yet if we consider one continuing strain in our tradition, we cannot without perverseness question the relevance to the present generation of Lincoln's literary art. His example, plainly, helped to break the monopoly of the dealers in literary plush. After Lincoln comes Mark Twain, and out of Mark Twain come contemporaries of ours as diverse as Sherwood Anderson, H. L. Mencken and Ernest Hemingway. Remote from New

England gentility, in the midst of which Emerson and Thoreau rise like rugged and inaccessible islands; a reproof to Johnsonese and journalese, that is, to the trade winds of the contemporary pulpit and editorial column; not even touched by the clear and dry generalizing of Jefferson and the *Federalist Papers*, which he so aptly studied, the style Lincoln fashioned for his uses—epistolary, argumentative, and exalted—is his alone.

But though now and then we mislay its pattern, that style—terse, transparent, memorable—remains the American style par excellence.



THE PRODUCTION OF

LINCOLN, THE LITERARY GENIUS

has been a personal labor of two loves. My own love of printing has been almost life-long, and making a handcrafted book has been a goal of recent years. My admiration for Abraham Lincoln has been even longer and the opportunity of printing a book about him cially appropriate. The seemed espe-Dean Barzun and the help cooperation of and advice of others has made it possible. The book has been hand composed in types after Claude Garamont. Printing has been done by hand on Ticonderoga Laid Text paper. This first printing has been limited to five hundred numbered and signed copies of which this is Number 2.

Mara K. Schori





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